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## SUNSHINE AND LEISURE.

THE late protracted and severe winter, with its biting frosts and storms of snow, its fogs and dismally depressing atmosphere, during which the only gleam of comfort for those in weak health was to be found at the fireside, will probably have suggested notions of escaping from a repetition of such dismal atmospheric conditions as have been just experienced throughout the British Islands. Many, of course, whatever be their complaints, must patiently submit to inflictions of this kind, their position almost precluding any prospective alleviation; others, more fortunately situated, will be free to consider the subject in all its bearings. For this latter class, to whom our remarks are more specially addressed, there is a double question which will require to be answered. Where to go to, and how to get away in the proper season?

Our own experience, like that of many health-seeking refugees, points in the first place to the Riviera, that beautiful and picturesque borderland of France and Italy along the margin of the Mediterranean for the space of a hundred and fifty miles or so, beginning with Hyères, Cannes, Nice, and Mentone, in France, and thereafter a few choice places in Italy. Over this ground we have been several times, and always with renewed pleasure and benefit. How often, in travelling from Lyons to Marseilles, and about midway entering ancient Provence, where the remains of Roman art begin to make their appearance, have we hailed with delight the sudden change of climate! The surly North is left behind, the pleasant South has begun to make its appearance. The clouds overhead disappear, leaving a clear blue sky with joyous sunshine, and of which change we have interesting tokens in the altered character of the vegetation; while the farther we go onwards, the change becomes more complete. No doubt, we shall be told by knowing ones that the climate of the Riviera is by no means unimpeachable. Certainly it has its drawbacks. At times, the mistral blows provokingly from the Pyrenees. There are

stretches of wet, plashy weather. Occasionally there is a frost with thin flakes of ice on the pools. Showers of hail are not unknown. There are days when you cannot comfortably sit in the open air, when even a fire in-doors would be acceptable, and when the windows at noon must be kept shut. All that is admitted, and yet we say that the Riviera, at properly chosen spots, is the best thing that you can get in the way of a winter health-resort within the compass of Europe. But why not go beyond Europe, and find a spot on the coast of Africa? Within the last few years, that has been done with less or more success. Algiers has been resorted to by numbers of persons from England, some of whom have given the world their experiences of the climate. All speak of the abundance of sunshine day after day for months, of the profusion of brilliant flowers, and of the amusingly Oriental character of the native inhabitants. The early and bright spring strikes with surprise. A friend of ours was astonished at finding fresh green peas on the table at the New Year. With this and some other attractions, however, there are serious disadvantages to be encountered. In the first place, there is a voyage by steamer of thirty-four hours from Marseilles. Post-letters to or from England take at least four days on the journey. The lower class of Arabs who are seen fluttering about are not noted for cleanliness. The drainage of some of the best houses is defective, the result being a tendency to typhoid. What also appears to us somewhat extraordinary, the persistence of sunshine is felt to be tiresome, or too much of a good thing. A cloudy day now and then, with an occasional shower, would be accepted as an agreeable change. If some of these objections may be thought fantastic, there is something more solid in the consideration that, notwithstanding many improvements in the place, there is a want of a good choice of houses and hotels to be obtained at reasonable charges.

The latest book we have seen on Algiers is that of Mr Alexander A. Knox, entitled 'The New Playground, or Wanderings in Algeria.' The writer,

with his wife, spent the winter season of 1879-80 at Algiers, or perhaps more correctly at 'Mustapha Supérieur,' a new suburb, situated on the high ground behind the town. He speaks favourably of the climate, yet hints at some things which can be found fault with. He refers to the terrible dust-storms, observing: 'I am reasonably confident that the combination of hot sun and cold, or cold wind laden with dust, which I have constantly met with here, must be trying to invalids with weak chests.' One day—the 27th of February—he says there was a blessed variety in the form of a fog worthy of England. On going to the bedroom window in the morning, he could not see five yards in front of him, the orange-trees and Moorish villas being all hidden under a veil of mist. This is a refreshing fact for those who adhere to the Riviera with all its European deficiencies. In concluding his interesting work, which we recommend to the attention of all who are looking about for a choice winter resort, he emphatically observes: 'The outcome of all I have to say, as far as residence in the town of Algiers itself and on Mustapha is concerned, just amounts to this. For brightness and sunshine, there is nothing like the climate within four days' post of London. There may be qualities in the air which render it unfit for some people; but as to the *brightness* of the place, there can be no manner of doubt. The heights of Mustapha are much the same thing as Torquay; but there is the wonderful sky above, and the background of mountains. Algiers is a beautiful place. As a set-off against this, the accommodation is sadly deficient. In the town, the two or three hotels are but of second-rate order. On Mustapha, there are a dozen or so villas fit for people with heavy purses; of a second-rate kind, not many, and these are not commendable; of makeshifts, not a few, but these are makeshifts indeed. The great want of the place is a good hotel on Mustapha, on the same scale as those to be found on the Riviera or the Italian lakes. Until this be forthcoming, let no one commit his family rashly to Algiers.'

Nothing need be added to this decisive opinion; and we do not think it necessary to refer to those more distant places, Cairo and Malta. We fall back, therefore, on the Riviera, not only on account of its accessibility, but other recommendations. One immense advantage is, that its health resorts are connected by the great line of railway from the British Channel to Paris. In travelling this way, we have usually stopped for the night at Lyons, where we found good accommodation at the Hôtel de l'Univers, close to the station; and next night we stopped at Marseilles. This was taking the journey leisurely. Many prefer to go straight on night and day, and for this class of travellers the French railway authorities provide carriages with sleeping accommodation, at a somewhat additional charge. These carriages, a species of Pullman cars, are of two kinds, named *wagons-lits* and *coupés-lits*. The *wagons-lits* are large

carriages, with one entrance into a passage, from which other doors open into the compartments, of which there are four, two to hold four people, and two for two. The compartment for two consists of one couch with sufficient room for three people sitting. At night, the conductor—who is always in attendance, and can be called at any moment by ringing the bell—comes in, and makes this couch into two beds, one above the other, like the berths of a ship. There are sheets and pillows; so, if one likes to undress, you may easily do so, provided you do not object to small space. At the end of the passage, there are two lavatories, one for ladies, the other for gentlemen, with every convenience. Food cannot be obtained in the carriages, though the conductor can supply wines, &c. Many take provisions with them, whilst others trust to getting supplies at stations on the way. The *coupés-lits* are of smaller dimensions, and more exclusive in character, but convenient for a party of two or three persons. By the means now described, the manner of travelling southwards is very comfortable, and enables invalids and delicate people to undergo the fatigues of a long journey without much difficulty. But it is necessary to engage places some days previously by writing to M. le Directeur de la Compagnie des Wagons-lits, 2 Rue Scribe, Paris; as there is an English clerk, it is unnecessary to write in French. Information is likewise to be obtained in connection with the through tickets of the South-eastern Railway, by applying at 25 Cockspur Street, London.

The railway runs right through Cannes, with a stopping-place at the middle of the town. Cannes, which was brought into notoriety by Lord Brougham, who went thither at the right time every season, cheating alike the winter and the gravedigger as long as flesh and blood could do so. Lately, the town has been largely extended and improved in different ways. Villas have been built along the slopes facing the south. Promenades and drives have been opened up along the sea-shore; and the number of hotels has been considerably increased. In fact, since Brougham's time, Cannes has almost undergone a renewal. There are prettily clothed hills behind the town; but, as we fear, they do not afford a very effective shelter to the north and westerly winds. The pleasure of outdoor life is, therefore, perhaps not all that could be wished; but if any such defect is experienced, it is probably outweighed by the consideration that Cannes is appreciated as the most select and aristocratic of the continental winter resorts favoured by the English.

Next in order in travelling along the coast, with the broad and placid Mediterranean on our right, we arrive at Nice, which within our remembrance was a dull unimproved Italian town; but which, since coming into the possession of the French, has sprung up to be a gay and delightful city, and entitled to be called the Brighton of

France. If anything, Nice is perhaps too full of gaiety; for, as is alleged, it is crowded with visitors from all parts of Europe, who here take up their quarters with the view of being near the gaming-tables of Monte Carlo—distance three-quarters of an hour by train, and frequent trains to and fro from morning till late at night. A public remonstrance concerning the demoralising character of Monte Carlo and its visitors has, we see, lately been made by the inhabitants of Nice.

If liveliness be reckoned one of the recommendations of Nice, to that may be added a number of excellent hotels, good house accommodation, and English doctors and druggists, along with good shops such as are found in all large towns. There are likewise libraries and reading-rooms. The railway trains draw up at a spacious station outside the town; and on arrival, there will be found at least a dozen omnibuses, connected with as many hotels, besides a choice of other vehicles. Nice is particularly well provided with cabs, and carriages and horses of a superior order may be had on hire. As in the case of Cannes, low hills stretch up behind the town, some of them offering sites for handsome villas, with a good outlook southwards over the Mediterranean. The hills, unfortunately, are not sufficiently high for shelter against northern blasts, and this is the serious drawback as regards a certain class of invalids. It has been properly observed by Dr J. Henry Bennet, in his work, 'A Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean,' that latitude is not all in all that invalids have to consider. He says that 'five degrees of south latitude do not make up in climate-questions for want of protection from north winds.' This agrees with our own experience. In searching for a thoroughly well-sheltered health resort on the shores of the Mediterranean, we found Mentone excelled all other places. Such also is emphatically the conclusion to which Dr Bennet has arrived. It may be deemed a conclusive proof of his appreciation of Mentone, when we know, that among all the Mediterranean health resorts, he has chosen it for his habitual winter residence. Those who are not encumbered with expectations as to social intercourse may here with advantage pass the more dreary months of winter. It is not, however, what this or that one says of a place, but the unerring testimony of Nature, as demonstrated in the contour and vegetation of the district, which decides its character.

Situated close upon the margin of the sea, along which there are some pleasant drives and promenades, Mentone is backed by a range of lofty mountains, which attain the height of four thousand feet above the sea-level. We might compare its situation to that of a town basking in the sun, and screened from the north by an enormously lofty semicircular wall. The high grounds are skirted intermediately by low hills and valleys clothed in olive trees, vines,

groves of orange, citron, and lemon. Nowhere have we seen olive trees of such great age and gigantic size as those which grow on Cap Martin, a peninsula which projects into the sea at the western entrance to the town. Trains from Nice reach Mentone in an hour and six minutes, having passed Monaco and Monte Carlo by the way. Though a comparatively modern place of resort for invalids, Mentone is already well provided with hotels, *pensions*, and furnished villas offered for hire for the season. The visitors have hitherto formed a quiet community of different nationalities. There is a handsomely built English church, also a Scotch church which is open during the winter season.

Mentone, with the slip of country in which it is situated, formerly belonged to Monaco; but as the result of a rupture with that tyrannical and rapacious principality, it has been attached to France since 1861. It has, therefore, had barely twenty years to effect sundry improvements, and to lay itself out as an attractive health resort for visitors. The older part of the town still exists as a curious specimen of mediæval architecture. The modern additions stretch east and westward along the Corniche Road, the great highway to Italy. The Italian frontier is in the eastern environs of the town, so that Mentone is the last town in France in this direction. Visitors, at their pleasure, by crossing the Pont St Louis, can therefore take a walk or drive into Italy, in which they will have an opportunity of visiting Dr Bennet's charming and extensive flower-garden, situated among the cliffs of the Corniche, and thence enjoying a magnificent view over the Mediterranean. In all our visits to Mentone, we had occasion to observe the thrift, honesty, and good behaviour of the natives, who are said to be descendants of the ancient Ligurians, a brave people who did their best to stem the ambitious encroachments of the Romans. Their language is an Italian *patois*; but all with whom visitors come in contact speak French. We found the town to be ill provided with libraries and reading-rooms, and our chief reliance was on imported English books and newspapers. Possibly, there may now be improvements in this respect. The postage-system with England is well conducted, the mail-service to and from London being managed in two days—international postage on a letter twopence-halfpenny. So commodious was the postage system, that we were able to carry on a literary correspondence with England—transmission of proofs, &c., with almost as much ease and satisfaction as if within thirty miles of Edinburgh.

The winter season at Mentone begins on the 25th of October, and terminates on the 25th April, when the heat becomes inconvenient. Our recommendation to intending visitors is, to go early, so as to look about them and have a good choice of winter-quarters. They will be assisted, as we always have been, by Mr Thomas

Willoughby, an English grocer and house-agent, who may be considered to be a kind of adviser-general, and is ready on all occasions to help his countrymen. The seasons at Mentone, as elsewhere, do not uniformly consist of an unbroken stretch of fine weather. There are good and bad seasons. If the weather be fine, as it is more likely to be than otherwise, it is fine indeed. The great blue sky overhead, brilliant sunshine, and mild, tranquil air, which can be safely enjoyed in walks or in drives, from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon, are all something which aged persons and invalids may well make an effort to secure. Much is done by health-seekers, by means of gentle rides on asses up the picturesque valleys which penetrate the mountain recesses, and where all that is beheld is simple and beautiful. Mentone is not a place for the racket of Swellodm, but for the revival of decaying or afflicted human nature, of all indeed who, in a rational manner, wish to spend their winters in the enjoyment of Sunshine and Leisure.

W. C.

### THE FORTUNES OF BERTRAM OAKLEY.

#### CHAPTER XV.—AFTER THE FUNERAL.

THE two sisters, Louisa and Rose Denham, seemed very forlorn and very sad—alone, they two—in the great house that had been built for the large-handed hospitality of the eighteenth century. They felt too small for the house, these two poor girls, doubly orphaned. They had been a little afraid when first they entered this, so grand a residence; but then they had been ashamed of their feminine fears, for had they not their father's courage and self-reliance to support them. Dr Denham in his youth had been used to wealth, and to the soft and bright surroundings which Money, the magician, brings in his train; and after long years of laborious patience, he had justly deemed himself near the goal. His name, he knew, was known to the profession, if not to the public. He had bought the practice of his old master, whose baronetcy and fortune had been founded on fees; yet many a country doctor is as good a healer as old Sir Samuel Jeffs, Surgeon Extraordinary to Royalty. Dr Denham had been his best and brightest pupil; but having been unjustly disinherited by a father who had been proud of him, was poor. The doctor had done his ungrudging, humble work until this good chance had come in his way. The good chance that had lain in the doctor's way had proved to be a trap, a pitfall, ruin to his daughters. Who can get back money thus spent? Many a Colonel or Major, under the old purchase system, must have felt, as in battle he dropped before the enemy's shot or shell, and lay dying—as real soldiers do die—how sorely wife and children would miss the eight thousand pounds or so which was the price of his commission. As with an officer, so with a doctor. The money paid to old Sir Samuel would never be refunded. It would not have been fair to ask it. The old medical Baronet, with faculties much impaired and waning memory, was wintering at Mentone; and had a bevy of expensive sons and eager-eyed nieces

around him to clamour for a share of the fabulous fees he had pouched in the heyday of his prosperity. Nothing was to be expected from that quarter.

Nor was any bounty, any mercy to be expected from Uncle Walter. That lamb-like client of Messrs Sowerby and French referred his nieces, and his nieces' lawyer, to his solicitors, Messrs Sowerby and French; and those gentlemen, on thin blue paper, in colourless semi-legal language, damped the hopes of all who would claim consideration from their esteemed friend. No; nothing, it was pretty plain, was to be expected from the generosity, or extracted from the compassion, of the *virtuoso* of Kensington.

The funeral had taken place. There were few mourners to fill the black coaches that custom renders necessary. Two or three middle-aged men, who had been fellow-pupils of William Denham, and remembered the bright promise of his youth, and had kept up a fitful correspondence with him in after-life, came to follow him to the grave. Uncle Walter, the chief-mourner, was there of course, with a gentle forgiving air upon his handsome clearly chiselled countenance, and perhaps—such is the force of hypocrisy—almost sincere in the belief that he was a deeply wronged man, and that his dead brother had all but ruined him.

'Too impetuous—so sadly sanguine,' was all that Mr Walter Denham said, in answer to some words of condolence on the part of one of the non-kindred mourners; but imagination quickly fills up a blank; and perhaps nobody of that small company save Bertram Oakley, went away unimpressed by the conviction that the younger brother had been a sufferer by the over-speculative tendencies of his departed senior.

It was all over presently. The only one of those who followed the good doctor's coffin to its last resting-place really sorrowing, was the young mill-hand of Blackston, the sickly student, whose acquaintance the physician had made in the airy wards of the Knights' Hospital of St John. There was the usual routine which habit dictates—the plumes, the scarfs, the gloves, the black horses, and human mummies feigning decorum, if not woe, and the heavy bill to pay; and gentle Dr Denham was buried out of sight of the world for which, living, he had done his brave best. The true mourners in these cases are the women that stay at home, behind lowered blinds, and invisible. Louisa and her sister were down-stairs again now; but the house seemed very empty and big and sad, and they were as cheerless and forlorn as any two good girls in all London.

'What are we to do?' asked pretty Rose, with a scared white face, after the truth had leaked out as to a peremptory visit paid by the confidential clerk of Messrs Sowerby and French, her uncle's lawyers, in company with an over-dressed young gentleman with a hothouse flower in his button-hole, and who represented a well-known firm of advertising house-agents. There was a favourable, or, as the young house-agent preferred to say, in the jargon of his craft, an eligible opportunity of reletting the Harley Street mansion, the lease of which, as well as the furniture, now appertained to Mr Walter Denham. That gentleman, in the words of the confidential clerk of his solicitors, 'would be acting as his own enemy' by



letting slip the chance, and therefore, per proxy of Messrs Sowerby and French, delicately inquired when it would be quite convenient to the ladies to vacate the premises.

The ladies were quite willing to go. It was irksome to Louisa Denham's proud yet gentle spirit to be indebted to her grasping kinsman for even the niggardly hospitality of a few days' houseroom. But the world's wheels and cogs and driving-gear are often slow to set in motion at the first; and Miss Denham, who had not been able to complete her arrangements, such as they were, was, for Rose's sake, to solicit the grace of a brief delay. The petty boon was granted, not too willingly; and then came consultations, long and frequent, but not over-satisfactory. What were they to do? Poor young Rose, with the best will in the world to be useful, was practically helpless. She ran over the little bead-roll of her feminine arts—the neat needlework, the crocheting and tatting and Berlin woolwork, and all sorts of pretty ways of employing bright eyes and deft fingers. But sage Louisa knew that such dainty inutilities, hawked about for sale, are not worth the price of the materials and the time and shoe-leather that go to the vending of them, appealing as they do to a glutted market and to a heedless public.

No; Louisa herself must be the bread-winner of the family, or, if not bread-winner exactly, since fifty pounds a year, the pittance which the girls inherited from their mother, insured bread and shelter, at anyrate the provider of the other necessities of life. She was fit to teach. Rose could sing with a sweet low voice that was rich with feeling and expression; but the plain-looking elder sister was a skilled musician, and as patient in teaching as she had been apt to learn. She knew, too, all that was expected from a governess at that time, when graduates of Girton College were not universally expected to be ready to communicate the accumulated erudition of a laborious girlhood, and her only dread was that she should find no pupils. She had written—it cost her a distinct effort to crave aid—to such of her former friends and acquaintances at Blackston as appeared most likely to be able to recommend her in London, and both the sisters were anxiously awaiting the result of this application.

Meanwhile, after much deliberation and many a painful search among the by-streets and back-streets to which genteel poverty shrinks, as by instinct, a lodging was engaged. It consisted but of two tiny rooms, the parlour floor, so called, of a contracted little bandbox of a lodging-house, in a side-street so meagre and humble that if the Chairman of the Board of Works, that mighty calf who makes shorter work, officially, with London brick and mortar than ever did Haroun Alraschid with the abuses of Bagdad, ordered it to be carted away before nightfall, its neighbours would hardly have noticed the gap its disappearance would leave. But it was cheap, that was the grand essential for these new tenants, to whom every weekly shilling made such a difference. And it was clean, was almost clean, for London—that is to say, where the atmosphere does its worst to set at nought painstaking housekeepers, with all that can be done with brush and broom and soap and flannel, against wind-borne pollution.

Then Rose and Louisa were fortunate in their

landlady. In these cases, and perhaps in all cases, the landlady is as well worth consideration as the lodging. Indeed, the airiest suite of rooms, in the best situation that well-to-do sojourners may select, would be spoiled by some landladies, tainted as it were by the vicinity of lurid-eyed harpies, sharp-clawed, venomous of tongue. But Mrs Conkling, of Lower Minden Street, No. 3, was a good specimen of her class, a worthy soul, hard-working, pinched, courageous, as some of her caste are, and although a widow, not one of those portentous relics in horrent cap and rusty bombazeen who levy black-mail, emphatically so called, on the strength of their desolate state and the better days which all widows have seen. Into what the French call the enjoyment of these rooms on Mrs Conkling's parlour floor, Rose and Louisa were to enter so soon as the letters from Blackston should arrive.

### TEA AND SILK FARMING IN NEW ZEALAND.

It may probably seem strange, if portions of New Zealand, as we shall endeavour to show, are really suitable for the production of tea and silk, that these valuable commodities have not long ago been numbered amongst its exports. A very little reflection, however, should account for the apparent anomaly. This interesting colony is situated at a vast distance from the mother-country; and its participation in the advantages of settled government and regular steam-communication has been of comparatively recent date, as contrasted with some other British colonies and settlements. It seems, indeed, almost like yesterday since the whole country was terrorised by a fierce, active, and warlike race, whose daring courage and aptitude for military adventure taxed for years the skill of some of our ablest soldiers. Thus, with a turbulent native population, and more or less war up to the year 1870, and later, it is scarcely surprising that even among the European settlers, only the more ordinary grades of agriculture and manufacture have, until of late years, been attempted, and that the more scientific industries of tea and silk farming are still reserved for the future.

We have coupled tea and silk together for reasons which will be obvious presently; but as the latter valuable article has already been successfully produced in New Zealand, as well as in Australia, we shall allude to the silk-industry first. Through the courtesy of Dr Hector, Director of the Geological Survey of New Zealand, we have recently received some interesting papers on silk-culture, copies of which were laid before the local parliament in 1870. From these documents, it appears that this industry had been brought before the notice of the government ten years ago by a colonist, who for seven years previously had been cultivating the Tuscan mulberry, and producing silk to a small extent, but who, from various causes, had not pursued the industry on a commercial scale. This gentleman had in several communications advocated the encouragement by the colonial authorities of silk-culture, and stated that four years' experience had convinced him that an annual yield of one hundred pounds sterling per acre would fall greatly short of the result he expected a few years later, when his trees had

grown older. However, beyond the usual polite acknowledgments from the officials, references for opinions to scientific men, and the appointment of a Royal Commission to collect information upon this and other topics, no steps appear then to have been taken.

Although thus apparently shelved for a time, the subject was not forgotten. The agitation of 1870 bore fruit; for we are informed, by a recently returned traveller from the colony, that he saw the mulberry growing luxuriantly in widely separated parts of the islands, and that some of the settlers as well as natives were turning their attention to, and doing a little in silk-production. Still later news announced the completion of the labours of the Colonial Industries Commission, and the publication of their Report, for a copy of which we are indebted to Sir Julius Vogel. Dipping into the Appendix, we find a letter addressed by Mr Richard Dignan to Mr Commissioner A. J. Burns, Auckland, of date 15th May 1880, in which Mr Dignan states that he had received a letter from a gentleman in Scotland, who had an idea that New Zealand is a suitable place for carrying on the silk-industry. The writer stated that competent authorities were of opinion that, unless some effectual remedy is discovered soon, the silkworms of Europe and part of Asia run a risk—from worm diseases—of early extinction. It was to new countries, therefore, like Australia and New Zealand that the silk brokers, merchants, and spinners of the future would have to look for supplies. The writer also asked whether the government would give any encouragement to persons willing to embark in this industry; and if so, in what direction would such encouragement tend. Mr Dignan, in his letter to the Commissioner, goes on to say that 'in and around the city of Auckland there are many mulberry trees; and if it were thought advisable, from these trees could be made the nucleus of a grove sufficient to try experiments in silk-raising. The white mulberry grows readily from cuttings, and thrives well in the district. I have raised several hundred plants myself during the last few years.'

The Commission in their Report state that 'there is little doubt that mulberry cultivation for silkworms could be pursued with advantage in some parts of New Zealand; and they again direct public attention to the papers which they had already published on this industry, which in their opinion could be pursued profitably even by cottagers and without any costly appliances. For the encouragement of the silk-industry, the Commission also recommend that the bonus should be revived which was offered in 1871—namely, 'A bonus of fifty per cent. on the value realised is offered for the production of the first one thousand pounds-worth of the cocoons of the silkworm or eggs of the silkworm produced in the colony, to be paid on quantities of not less value than fifty, or more than one hundred pounds produced by any one person.' Nothing is said about tea; but no doubt that article would be likewise recognised as a future product among the local industries for which the Commission guarantee interest up to five per cent. on the outlay for a period of four, five, or six years, according to the nature of the undertaking.

The position, therefore, of silk-culture in New Zealand at the present moment is this: Ten years

ago, it was proved on an experimental scale to be a success; a government bonus was offered for its further encouragement, but unfortunately allowed to lapse; the revival of this bonus has lately been recommended by the Colonial Industries Commission; and meanwhile the industry is being prosecuted in a small way by both colonists and Maoris. The mulberry is reported to be growing luxuriantly in different parts of the islands; and we learn from the official Catalogue of the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879, that a gentleman in Auckland showed crude silk, the produce of one thousand silkworms reared by himself, and fed principally on mulberry, and occasionally on lettuce and fig leaves; and another in Christchurch exhibited cases of silk from worms fed in Canterbury.

These statements and quotations may be held as sufficient testimony of the suitability of parts of New Zealand for silk-culture; hence we shall now endeavour to explain how it is that this industry should be linked with tea-culture on the same farm, in order to achieve a financial success.

The silk-harvest in China usually embraces seven separate broods of worms, technically called *educations*, and is complete in about six weeks. In other parts of Asia it sometimes lasts longer; in Australia and California, longer still; and in New Zealand, owing to the magnificent climate, especially in the province of Auckland, the harvest is expected to exceed in duration, copiousness, and value the silk-crop obtained elsewhere. Some additional expansion of the harvest may, it is thought, be artificially effected by the judicious selection and cultivation of other silk-producing worms besides the mulberry-feeding *Bombyx mori*, such as the *Attacus ricini*, which eats the leaves of the castor-oil plant; the *Attacus atlas*, whose food grows on the terminalia and jujube trees—a worm which yields the celebrated, almost everlasting, gray Tussah silk of China and India; the *Antheraea roylei*, which subsists upon the leaves of the common hill-oak; and the *Bombyx cynthia*, whose natural food is the alianthus.

But after every known variety and modification of silk-culture shall have been tried, long periods of every year must remain during which all indoor silk industry will necessarily cease from lack of material. At the utmost, so far as our present knowledge can aid us in forecasting the future, the New Zealand silk-harvest of the 'good time coming' may thus be spread over three months, instead of the short six weeks of China; but even this extension could scarcely be reckoned satisfactory, as the bulk of the manipulators, besides many of the outdoor labourers, would for the remainder of the year be almost unemployed, and so become a burden, if not a nuisance, to the farmer. In old and thoroughly settled countries with teeming populations, this objection could not be urged, as the employer there, in almost any department of human industry, can nearly always regulate the number of his workers according to the demands of the harvest or of commerce; but where, as at the antipodes, an expensive staff would require to be collected together from distant countries and organised at a considerable expenditure of patience and money, the discharge of even a single skilled *employé*, except for gross misconduct, would be altogether unadvisable. This difficulty of continuously and remuneratively

occupying the time of such a staff is indeed essentially the weak point connected with the commencement of silk-culture in any sparsely peopled country; and it is the rock upon which, we believe, every similar enterprise must split, should the farmer aim only at silk-production without some alternative means of filling up the time of his workers. In order to prove remunerative, therefore, silk-culture in New Zealand must be combined with some other kindred or allied industry; and we are acquainted with none so nearly related to it, and in every way so thoroughly fitted to form a twin enterprise on the same estate and under the same general management, as the cultivation and preparation of tea.

There is nothing utopian in the proposal to combine these industries, although tea-growing, except in some of the colonial botanic gardens, has not yet been attempted in New Zealand. Certain conditions are required for the germination of tea-seed and the production of plants; at the same time it does not follow as a matter of course that these conditions being fulfilled, the result must prove a commercial success. Tea of the hardy China type will grow almost anywhere, but not in every instance to pay. Plants of it were seen a few years ago by the writer growing perfectly well in the open air some twelve miles from London during a most inclement spring; groves of it are known to thrive uninjured amidst snow in the north of China, when, in order to protect the bark from the teeth of the white foxes which sometimes swarm in winter, straw bands are wound around the stems; in the Himalayas, tea-shrubs and trees flourish at a height of five and even seven thousand feet above the sea, where keen frost and storms of hail are not unknown; and in Ceylon, tea-harvests have been obtained at over five thousand feet. In none of these examples, however, can it be truly averred that, although the quality of the tea might be excellent, the copiousness of the return was satisfactory. A gratifying pecuniary issue from a tea-industry depends not so much upon the possession of one or two apparently well-marked advantages, as upon the presence and co-operation of a number of minor, and seemingly even trivial, circumstances.

Both the well-marked and the minor advantages of successful tea-raising are we think offered by New Zealand. If we institute inquiries, it will be found that the climate in the interior of Otago and that of all the beautiful province of Auckland closely resembles that of the tea and silk districts of China; that the thermometer indicates from ninety to a hundred degrees of Fahrenheit nearly every summer; that as high as one hundred and ten degrees have been noted at Alexandra, on the Molyneux River; that the mulberry, ailanthus, and castor-oil plant grow luxuriantly, particularly in Auckland; and that the experience of tea and silk farmers in other parts of the world has led to the oriental apothegm, that 'wherever the mulberry grows in profusion, there Nature indicates a suitable spot for tea.' These inquiries would also ascertain that throughout the latter province snow is seldom seen, except upon the mountain tops; that even slight frosts are necessarily a rarity in a land where the forests are evergreen, and semi-tropical fruits grow with lavish prodigality in the open air; that moderate and

vivifying showers to the extent of forty-seven inches fall during about a hundred and eighty-six days of the year; that the mean of the coldest month is fifty-one degrees, and that of the warmest sixty-eight degrees; that the grape-vine and olive may in some districts be seen intermingled with the ordinary fences; and that the hot, blasting winds and sand-storms of Asia and Australia, so inimical to tea and mulberry culture, and so deadly to the silkworm, are unknown. Such are the natural attractions and advantages which invite the tea and silk farmer to New Zealand.

As regards China, there is, unfortunately, no trustworthy record of the temperature in the silk and tea producing districts; but at Shanghai, fairly careful observations were for some years made. By a comparison of the respective temperatures, rainfalls, &c., of China and New Zealand, a strong case seems to be made out in favour of the latter, and especially of the province of Auckland, for the culture of tea. It may not swelter in the intense heat of India, and for this very reason it does not require India's excessive rains to restore the equilibrium disturbed by profuse evaporation; but possessing, as it does in some respects, a climate superior to either China or India, Auckland would appear to be equally suited to produce the hardy and sweetly flavoured teas of the one country, as well as the less robust although more astringent growths of the other.

It has already been explained that, under even the most favourable circumstances, the silk-harvest in New Zealand can scarcely be expected to extend over more than three months, and that for the rest of the year most of the employés of a silk-farming Company would either roam about idle or have to be discharged. The tea-harvest, on the other hand, commencing later, and being usually protracted over six or eight months, a tea Company's servants could reckon upon longer engagements. Here, it may be urged that the tea department being evidently the more important employer of labour, why not farm tea by itself, and let silk-culture alone? The answer is decisive. Silk-culture promises to be by far the more remunerative industry of the two, but only if conducted in combination with tea-farming. From tea-farming alone, no profit of consequence need be expected until the fourth year; whereas the return from a mulberry acreage judiciously managed, would be almost immediate. Again, from the great demand for tea at the antipodes, which is annually increasing with rapid strides, it is believed that all the tea which could be produced would find a ready sale on the spot and in Australia; whilst most of the silk products would require, for some years at least, to be consigned to Europe, in order to secure a desirable market. Nothing further, surely, is required to corroborate our statement that the two industries must be conducted *together*, than the circumstance, that the same staff of labourers could be equally well employed for both industries, with a few persons specially skilled in the respective branches to act as overseers. In this way the combined strength of the workers could be made available for the separate harvests of tea and silk, as these occurred, and ample employment would thus be given to the whole establishment all the year round.

It is, unfortunately, quite uncertain how far the assistance of the natives is to be obtained for hire, notwithstanding the fact, already mentioned, that a few of them have taken to silk-culture in a small way. Some colonists of considerable experience are inclined to take a favourable view of the possibilities of the Maori character, and think that when it has had a little more time to develop, and habits of industry have been confirmed, especially in the rising generation, through the salutary influence of the schools which have been established, much useful labour may be had at reasonable wages. Others, whose opinions are quite as much entitled to respect, take a contrary view, and assert that the Maori, old or young, is a hopeless creature and utterly untrustworthy. Without committing ourselves to an opinion either way, we see an alternative labour-supply in the many hundreds of industrious Chinese already settled, particularly in the Middle Island, whose co-operation in congenial industries could no doubt be secured. Such workers, in some cases with experience acquired at the great centres of tea and silk production in China, would prove very valuable. It would always be open, too, to import labour and skill direct from the latter country, as we know that the offer of one shilling a day to the impecunious Asiatic who hitherto has been toiling at home for a wage of less than sixpence, is an inducement not likely to remain long neglected. The difficulty, indeed, connected with the sons of the yellow race has rarely been in persuading them to leave their native land for others where wages could be earned, but rather to prevent them swarming over like locusts, as in California, and monopolising the whole labour of the locality, to the exclusion and disgust of the workmen of other nationalities. At first, doubtless, the cost of labour in New Zealand would be greater than it would afterwards become—so great, perhaps, as to preclude private enterprise; but to a public Company with an adequate capital employed under skilful management, a large initial outlay in labour and plant would simply be the laying of a broad foundation upon which the future prosperity of the syndicate would be reared.

It would only be misleading at this the theoretical stage of a future New Zealand Tea and Silk Company, to pronounce authoritatively upon the question of financial results; but it is quite legitimate to quote the achievements of tea and silk farmers in other parts of the world. On some of the Indian gardens, we understand that recently as much as twenty-two and a half per cent. of net profit has been realised. In the Indian Tea Gazette of May 1879, a list of tea estates then in full operation was given, whence we learn that the cost of bringing eleven different estates into a condition of leaf-bearing was on an average about L.71, 17s. 6d. per acre; that the average yield of marketable tea per acre was two hundred and eighty and a half pounds; that the average cost of production was one shilling and twopence farthing per pound; that the average price realised was one shilling and sixpence halfpenny; and that the average dividend paid the shareholders was about eight and a quarter per cent. In these examples, the actual dividends ranged from four up to twenty per cent., according to the ability with which the various gardens were managed. Colonel

Money—probably the best authority at present on tea-culture in India—calculates that after the eighth year, one hundred acres under tea-shrubs, judiciously managed, ought to yield a profit of at least two thousand pounds a year; and we learn that in Australia, with all its disadvantages for carrying on the silk-industry, a profit of over eighty-three pounds per acre has been shown from silk during the experimental stage in Victoria.

Having regard, therefore, to the foregoing remarks collectively; taking into account the unrivalled climate in which a New Zealand Tea and Silk Company's operations would be conducted; keeping in view the favourable report and recommendations of the New Zealand Colonial Industries Commission of 1880 on silk-culture; and referring again to the ample field for tea consumption at the antipodes—we leave it to our readers to consider for themselves the proposed enterprise.

### HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER.

#### IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

ONE day my husband and John returned with the boat earlier than was expected. Phil had hurt his foot at the fishing, and needed a few days' rest. In the evening I walked up to Mr Burton's house, and John accompanied me. Teenie met us at the door; she seemed glad to see me, but her greeting to John was cold and diffident. Mr Burton and Hal were seated at the window when we entered.

'This is indeed a pleasure, Mrs Carew,' said Mr Burton. 'You so rarely give us the pleasure of a visit.' Then, seeing John, he added: 'And John too!—back so soon from the fishing! Taken a great catch, I suppose?'

'No, Mr Burton,' said John; 't' herrin' is nought but poor yet. Father has hurt his foot.'

'Not seriously, I hope?' inquired Mr Burton.

'No, only a bit bruise; he'll maybe be all right t' morn.'

Hal had placed me in an easy-chair by the window. He now turned to John, as though struck by a sudden thought. 'It is a pity the men should lose the fishing; will you let me go with you to-morrow? I had intended making a trip some day, and this will be a good opportunity. You can take father's place, and I will give you all the help I can.'

John was seated in shadow, but I could see that his face darkened at the words. At last he said: 'Thou is better ashore in pleasanter company. Such rough chaps as us are best to ourselves. Thou is not wanted; so there.'

'Nonsense, John,' said Hal with a laugh. 'You must let me go with you this once, old fellow. I have a great wish to see the men at work, and I'll try not to be in the way.'

John did not answer; but Teenie, who was seated by my side, seemed to have noticed the sullen tone of John's voice, and said pleadingly to Hal: 'Would it not be better to wait until Mr Carew is better? He would willingly take you, Hal. We had arranged to go to Hinderwell to-morrow to sketch the old church. Believe me, it would be far better.'

John seemed stung by the words, and he spoke again more bitterly than before. 'Ay go with t'



lass; she would be dull without ye. Thou is both gotten t' cut of t' quality; like takes to like, an' thou seems to get on wi' one another. I'm not wanted with thou, I know, an' thou's not wanted wi' me.'

I sat trembling with fear lest John should further forget himself. Hal did not seem to notice the scorn in John's answer, but replied quietly: 'Hinderwell will wait for another day, Teenie. I have made up my mind to go to the fishing, and I am sure John will not refuse me.'

'Thou mun go then, if thou will; but I tell ye again, thou is not wanted.'

Mr Burton put an end to the subject by asking Teenie to sing one of her ballads.

That night I saw the bitter truth 'only too plainly. The clouds lay heavy on John's brow, and he seemed in very agony of soul. I think Teenie knew this, for her voice trembled as she sang, and at last she burst into a flood of tears.

When she had somewhat recovered, Mr Burton suggested that they should walk home with us, as the night was so very fine, and the air might do Teenie good.

I took Hal's arm, and with Mr Burton by his side we walked slowly homewards. Teenie and John lingered behind us. After we had gone but a short distance John called out: 'Mr Burton, Teenie an' I are going round by t' cliffs, an' 'll meet ye at Seaton Garth.'

'All right,' said Mr Burton. 'You young people are quicker than we old ones; Teenie will be all the better for a run.'

So together they went.

When we came to Seaton Garth, they were not in sight; so we passed into the cottage. After a time they came. John's face, I could see, was dark with passion, and poor Teenie looked fearfully wan. For good or ill, the truth had been told; but what had been the result, I could not know.

That night I spoke with Hal alone. When all was still I went to his room. I had made up my mind to tell him all, and to warn him against rousing further the jealous anger of his brother. He was standing at the little window overlooking the cove when I entered. There was a troubled expression in his face that was new to it. When he saw me, he turned quickly, and took my hand. 'Mother, I am so glad you have come,' he said. 'Something is wrong; I knew by your face this evening, and see, you are trembling! Is it something about John? Listen how he paces to and fro! Before you came, I heard him sobbing very bitterly. It can be no light trouble that has fallen upon him.'

Even while he spoke I heard a smothered cry from the next room, followed quickly by hasty steps descending the stairs. I looked through the door, and saw John step out into the night. He had gone to wrestle with his sorrow alone.

'Mother darling,' pleaded Hal, 'what does all this mean? What trouble has fallen upon John? Can I not go and help him?'

'No, no; he is far better alone,' I said. 'But can you not tell the cause, Hal?'

'No, indeed, mother—unless it be the fishing. John seemed unwilling for me to go; but that could not affect him so deeply.'

I laid my hand on Hal's shoulder, and looked him steadily in the face. 'You love Teenie Granger, do you not, my boy?' I asked.

Without a trace of shame or hesitation he answered: 'Yes indeed, mother; and Teenie is worthy of all the love I can give her. But what of this? Why do you ask?'

'Because your brother has loved her for many months, and loves her still!'

Hal gave a quick, low cry as he saw the bitter truth. It needed no other words; he understood fully the cruel misery that had fallen upon his brother. 'Oh, mother darling!' he sobbed; 'you do not think that I knew of this? God knows, I had no thought of my brother loving Teenie too. I have wronged him very deeply, but I knew it not. Oh, if I had but known—if I had but known!'

We were silent for a while. Then I said: 'But Teenie herself knew. Did she not tell you?'

'No indeed, mother, or this mischief would have been undone; now, alas, I love her with my whole soul. What can be done? for I know not!'

I scarcely knew what to answer, but said as quietly as I could: 'Does Mr Burton know of this?'

'Of my love for Teenie he has heard; but this bitter wrong he cannot know, or he would have spoken to me of it.'

'Then let all remain as it is until after the fishing,' I replied. 'Try to appease John, but say nothing of what has occurred. I will speak with Teenie, and after that we will decide as to the future.'

'It cannot be that she knew of his love,' said Hal. 'If she had but known, she would have returned that love; he is so kind and tender and true. Let me speak with her, mother, and ask her this; for if need be I will give her up, and—and go away for ever.'

'No, my boy—this cannot be,' I replied. 'I can tell her this far better than you. You will go to the fishing to-morrow?'

'Yes, mother, if he will have me.'

'And now, good-night;' and I kissed him very tenderly. 'I cannot but believe that you are my own true-hearted Hal, and had no thought of wrong. Ask guidance of Him who alone can lead you aright, and help you in this bitter need.'

In the morning when I arose, he had gone to the fishing with his brother.

Towards evening I went down to Mr Burton's house. Teenie was seated alone when I entered. Her uncle, she said, had gone to a meeting of the Methodists—with whom, like ourselves, he was connected—and would not return until late. I was glad to learn this, as there could be no disturbance to our talk, and I had much to say.

'You are in trouble, Teenie,' I said, 'and I have come to speak with you alone. Will you tell me all, child?'

There was a brief look of alarm on Teenie's face at these words, but in a moment her old trusting confidence returned. 'Oh, Mrs Carew,' she cried, 'you are not angry with me, are you? I have been very wicked and thoughtless, but believe me I did not think of sorrow like this; indeed I did not.'

'A cruel wrong has been done to my boy,' I returned. 'There is hatred in his heart against his brother. Do you know the cause?'

'Yes,' said Teenie in a low voice, and her lips

trembled as she spoke; 'I have known for some days, but not fully until last night. Oh, Mrs Carew, I am very miserable, and no one can help me! If my mother were living, I would tell her all about it, and she would show me what to do. She would not be angry with me for what I have done.'

I felt the rebuke her words implied; in my haste I had spoken harshly. 'I have not come to judge you, Teenie, but to guide you, and help you to do what is right. Speak to me freely as to your own dead mother. I love you well, darling, and ever shall.'

The deep blue eyes overflowed with tears; with a sob she put her arms around my neck, and her head sank upon my breast. And thus she told me her story in broken words.

'It was before Hal came home that all this sorrow began. John was with me a good deal, and he got to love me. I found it out only when Hal came home; before then I had no thought of it, or I should not have acted as I did. It was thoughtless of me to be with him so much; but indeed I did not try to win his love. He was kind to me, and I liked to be with him; that was how the mistake was made.'

'But did you not see that you had gained his love?' I asked. 'Were no words ever spoken by him to tell you this?'

'Never but once,' she answered; 'and that was just after Hal's return. I told him then that I could not allow him to speak such words to me; that I had not known him long enough to judge whether I cared for him or not; but that I did like him very much, and would love him if I could. It was wrong of me to give him even that hope; but he had been so kind and good to me, and I pitied him very much. Do you think it was very wrong, Mrs Carew?'

'It was certainly weak; but I dare not say that it was wrong. Perhaps if you had spoken out boldly, this after-misery might have been avoided.'

Then she continued with her story. 'After this I tried to avoid him, and he grew angry and sullen. He never spoke to me in the old free-hearted way, and I grew afraid, and dreaded to meet him. I was sorry for him; but I knew that I could not look upon him as he wished.'

'It is very unfortunate,' I said; 'for he loves you well—too well, indeed, ever to forget you.'

'I know it,' sobbed poor Teenie; 'and it has troubled me very much. Then, when I knew that I loved Hal, I was miserable indeed. He has told you of our love, dear Mrs Carew?'

'Yes, Teenie; he spoke to me of it last night.'

'And you are not angry with me? He is far above me, I know, and I am unworthy of love like his; but I will try to deserve it. If anything came between us, it would kill me, for my whole life is in his keeping.'

I pressed her closer to my heart, and gave her a mother's kiss. Love like hers was worthy of any man; and I knew that Hal would treasure and value it above all the world.

'If it were not for John,' she said, 'I should be so fully content; but his stricken, passionate face is ever in my sight. Last night he spoke cruel and bitter words to me; he had forgotten himself. My heart bled for him; but I could not give him the love he asked. I told him that my heart

had never been his; that even if Hal had not won my love, he could never have been more to me than a brother; that I was sorry if I had led him to think otherwise, but that I had done it quite innocently. Then in desperate, burning words—oh, Mrs Carew, they ring in my ears even now—he cursed me and the man who had come between us; he was no brother of his, he said; and he should hate him to his dying day.'

'Oh, my poor misguided boy!' and I strove to comfort her, for the telling of this story seemed to be cruelly painful to her. 'He said this,' I continued, 'in his anger—he could not mean it. This wild love has maddened him; God be with him in his bitter need.'

'I was afraid to look into his face,' pursued Teenie—'it was so fearfully changed. He saw that he had frightened me, and began to speak kindly; he used loving words, such words of passionate pleading, that my heart was wrung with pity; and to escape him I said hurriedly: "Let me go home, John; I am sorry for you—more than words can tell. In a day or two I will speak with you again." And so we came to Seaton Garth.'

'It is a cruel story, Teenie,' I said; 'and I know not how to act. No good can come of a passion like this; it is unworthy of my son, and will bring its own punishment.'

'But you will do something to help me, Mrs Carew,' pleaded Teenie. 'I have been sorely to blame; but I cannot give up my love for Hal. You would not ask me?'

'No, darling,' I answered tenderly; 'that would be a deeper wrong. Hal has the only claim upon you.'

'And you will speak with John,' urged Teenie; 'and plead with him to—forget me?'

'I will tell him all you have said. It may be that he has already become his old and better self.'

After a short time I bade Teenie good-night, and returned home.

The next night there was a fearful storm. Nothing like it had happened since the gale of 1815, when six of the Staithes yawls were lost with all hands, and the hamlet of Runswick suffered still more severely. The wind had suddenly changed from west to north-east, and the great waves broke full into the narrow bay, reaching the very walls of the cottage, and dashing in spray against the windows. Through the weary hours I could only pray that my boys out on the angry deep might be spared to return home in safety.

In the morning the storm had passed away, and by noon most of the boats had made the harbour. There were sad hearts in Staithes that day, for the sea had claimed many a loved one. One boat had lost the skipper and his three sons, and many others suffered heavily in men and gear. The place was full of sorrow for those who would never return. From the crew of the *Flying Jane* we received tidings of John and his brother. One of John's crew—Jemmy Stevens—was unwell, and wished to return home; and when the *Flying Jane* signalled that she intended going into port, John immediately replied that he had a message to send by her. A cable was put off from my son's boat containing Jemmy Stevens and Hal. Stevens came on shore with the *Flying Jane*,

and Hal went back to the fishing at the 'Silver Pits,' where they intended remaining for some days longer.

In the evening of that day, I saw a crowd gathered at the jetty round a boat which had just come in. I knew at a glance that it was my boys who had returned, and waited for them coming up to the house. The crowd grew thicker, and a great fear that something was wrong came upon me. In a few moments the crowd parted, and up the steep path came my boy John with the crew behind him. That something had happened, I could see by the faces of the men. My boy was staggering and reeling like a drunken man. His face was painfully stricken, not with passion, but as with a woe too deep for words; his eyes looked weird and glassy, fixed upon vacancy; and his whole form was bowed as with a heavy load. He stood for a moment with his trembling hand before his eyes, as though striving to shut out some fearful sight, and then sank into a seat. When I took his hand and asked him what had happened, he spake no word, but shuddered from head to foot, and moaned most piteously. The men stood in a hushed group at the door. I spoke to Barton Verity, who stood nearest to me. 'What has happened, Verity? Where is my boy Hal? Why has he not come home?'

Verity turned to Seth Poad, who stood by his side. 'Thou mun tell her,' said he; 'for, woe is me, I cannot say t' words.'

'Cannot say what? For God's sake, where is the lad? Speak, man, speak!' and I seized him by the arm.

'He'll never come home to Seaton Garth again, for he lies drowned in t' deep seas.'

'Drowned in t' deep seas! Who is drowned in t' deep seas? Not my John?' and Phil entered among the group. He had heard voices, and had come down from his room to know the cause of the disturbance. For a moment he did not notice John; but when his eyes fell upon the lad's haggard face, he drew back, struck by its mute agony. 'God forgive us!' he murmured; 'but what is wrong?—Seth Poad, thou mun tell me the meaning of this.'

'Alas, that ever I should have to say t' words; but t' young master lies drowned in t' Silver Pits.'

The words rang their cruel echoes in my ears—'drowned in t' Silver Pits;' but I could not realise all their woeful meaning. 'John,' I pleaded, 'if you love me, in pity speak, and tell me all. This is false, is it not? Say it is false, my son, say it is false. O merciful heaven, it cannot be true, it cannot be true!'

'Ay, speak to us, bairn;' and Phil tried to rouse him. 'I cannot make out the meaning of this fool's tale. Where is thy brother?'

John had not spoken a word since he entered the cottage; but at last his lips moved, and in a low, hushed voice, like one in a dream, he said; 'Am I my brother's keeper? I told him to gan wi' t' lass, but he would not be said nay. His blood be on his ain head.'

'It's God A'mighty's will,' said Poad in the hope of giving some consolation, 'an' we mun just bear t' burden he puts upon us.'

'Who says it's God A'mighty's will?' and John raised his voice somewhat as he spoke; but the wild, weird, stricken look never once passed from

his face. 'God A'mighty had no hand in sik a foul deed. 'Twas t' devil's work, an' sik as follow his biddance. But I told t' lad, I did, an' he wouldn't be bid; an' it's his ain work, an' t' work o' them as bred strife between him an' me.'

His words caused a great fear to arise in my heart; and yet I could not believe that John had wronged his brother. There might have been angry words, but I dared not think of sin. 'My poor boy,' I pleaded, 'in pity tell me how your brother died.'

'Ay, be manful, an' speak out thy heart,' urged Phil.

John trembled sorely as we spoke, and murmured in the same low voice, speaking rather to himself than to us: 'God knows, I loved t' lad; I allus loved him when he were a wee bit chap, an' had no thought of ill ever comin' between us. I would ha' given my life for him; but he wronged me, he did, an' I were bitter against t' lad—ay, as bitter as death.' The last words were spoken in a strange, hoarse whisper, and he shuddered like one in deadly fear.

Strive as I would, I could not drive away that cruel, haunting suspicion. Had there been violence? Was my bonnie, well-beloved lad his brother's murderer? The agony of that thought was more than I could bear, and I determined to know the truth.

'Barton Verity,' I exclaimed, 'I insist upon your telling the meaning of this? If my boy be dead, how did he meet his death? I cannot understand his brother's words.'

'I cannot tell t' lad's meaning, Mistress Carew,' said Verity; 'but I can speak of t' young master's death.' Then, in his own way, he told us the particulars of the sad story. The day previously Stevens was ill, and wished to go home. When the *Flying Jane* hoisted signals that she was bound for the port, John said that Stevens could go in the coble, if only Hal would take him and bring it back. So the two started, although Hal hesitated, and would fain have held back. John spake some taunting words, and so urged his brother to go against his will. The sun had set, and it was already growing dusk, before the coble was seen to put off again from the *Flying Jane*. In the meantime the wind had risen, and threatened to blow a gale, so that John gave orders to hoist sail and meet the lad. But even before they had got well under-weigh, the storm was upon them, and the fishing craft almost heeled over as the blast struck her. But in a moment she righted herself, and went driving ahead towards the coble. In a few minutes they saw the latter plunging in the surf, but struggling bravely on. The only chance of saving Hal was to throw him a rope as he passed by on the leeward side. Verity steered straight toward the lad, and John stood in the bows with a rope in his hand ready to fling it to his brother. The night was growing rapidly dark, but there was still sufficient light to see the coble as it rushed by on the crest of a wave. All thought that Hal was saved; but in a moment a fearful cry was heard, and John staggered from the bows, and fell prone upon the deck. When they looked out astern, the little boat was driving rapidly away into the darkness. The sailing craft was put about, but nothing could be seen of my poor, lost boy. The next day they found the coble floating keel upward.

John had not moved during the telling of the story, only at times moaning piteously. Suddenly he rose and caught hold of his father's hand, and looked pleadingly in his face: 'I would ha' given my life to save t' lad. His loss were his ain work. There's no mark o' Cain on my brow; ye wunnt think it—say ye wunnt?'

'Not if all the world said it, my bairn; but nobody has sik a thought. Thou's mad wi' grief, an' mun go an' rest the self. Ye'll happen be all right t' morn.'

I took him by the hand and led him from the room. When I kissed him at leaving, he laid his head upon the pillow, and sobbed aloud. His sorrow had struck me dumb: I could but leave him alone.

The men had gone when I returned to Phil. What followed I must pass over in silence. Hitherto I had restrained my sorrow, but now it gave way without hindrance. There could not be any doubt about my darling's death; he would never return to those who loved him so fondly, and sorrowed for him so deeply; never, until the sea gave up her dead.

#### WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

In the life of William Lloyd Garrison we have a striking instance of what can be achieved by persistent, well-directed effort. This man, born in humble life in the state of Massachusetts, America, but endowed with great force of character and a latent store of literary power, became, as he grew up, impressed with the enormities of the slave-system as he saw it existing around him, and set himself with all his energy of nature and strength of will to have that system abolished. He was, after many years of a severe often disheartening struggle, at length successful, and became with others instrumental in conferring upon four millions of slaves the precious blessings of liberty.

Garrison was born in 1805. His father was a man of some literary culture and taste, but unfortunately had contracted dissolute habits, the support of his family becoming in consequence almost entirely dependent upon the exertions of his wife. After a brief service, first as an apprentice shoemaker, and then as a cabinetmaker, Garrison, at thirteen years of age became a printer. At sixteen, he began to contribute anonymous articles to the paper on which he was employed as an apprentice. Week after week, communications were received from 'the highly respected correspondent, A. O. B.' (An Old Bachelor), and some time elapsed before the respected correspondent and industrious apprentice were discovered to be identical. Garrison at this time was a reader of the anti-slavery paper published by Benjamin Lundy, a little Quaker hardly beyond a dwarf in stature, but whose journal went by the high-sounding name of *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*. It was, however, a vigorously conducted paper, and from it Garrison learned the enormity of the great national evil of slavery, and the outrage practised through it on humanity. A new aim

was thus given to his existence, and he at once set himself to do all in his power to remove the evil referred to.

After having honourably fulfilled his apprenticeship, he accepted of an editorship in Vermont; whence Lundy, far away in Baltimore, heard of him. The Quaker, after making his journey to Boston by stage, took staff in hand, and travelled on foot the long and weary way to the green mountains of Vermont, to see Garrison face to face. An arrangement was then come to, by which Garrison returned with Lundy to Baltimore, to become joint-editor of *The Genius*. But the youthful enthusiasm and determined will of Garrison were not quite in keeping with the moderation and caution of Lundy, who advocated gradual emancipation, while his literary companion demanded that it should be immediate.

In the spring of 1830, it happened that a merchant sent one of his ships laden with slaves to Baltimore on its way to the southern market. The sight of this ship with eighty slaves on board incited Garrison to denounce in strong terms this shocking cruelty. For this offence, he was tried, and sentenced to pay fifty dollars or be sent to prison. He chose the latter alternative. Hearing of this, Arthur Tappan, a well-known philanthropist of New York, forwarded one hundred dollars, and the champion of emancipation was once more at liberty. On the 1st of January 1831, he published the first number of *The Liberator*, a journal started by himself to advocate the cause of immediate emancipation. The paper created the utmost exasperation among the slaveholders, and scarcely a day passed that Garrison did not receive letters offering to fight him, or making threats of assassination. The fear and hatred with which he was regarded by his opponents were almost equally strong; and to such a degree was opposition to him carried, that the state of Georgia actually offered through its legislature a reward of five thousand dollars to any who should prosecute and convict him according to the laws of that state.

In 1833, Garrison came to England for the purpose of enlightening the leading spirits in the anti-slavery cause as to the spuriousness and fallacies of what was then called the Colonisation Society. This Society advocated the sending of the slaves back to Africa, in order to free the states of their coloured men. During his stay in England, Garrison became the friend of Clarkson, Wilberforce, Brougham, Macaulay, O'Connell, and George Thompson. So much, indeed, had he become identified with the coloured men whose cause he advocated, that, on one occasion, when Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton had invited him to breakfast, the Baronet on Garrison's arrival held up his hands in astonishment. 'Why, my dear sir,' exclaimed Sir Thomas, 'I thought you were a black man, and have consequently invited this company of ladies and gentlemen to be present to welcome Mr Garrison, the black advocate of



emancipation, from the United States of America !' Garrison used to say that this was the greatest compliment he had ever received, as it was a testimony to his unqualified recognition of the humanity of the negro. While in London at this time, Garrison had also what must have been to him the intense satisfaction of hearing the debate in parliament on the Bill for abolishing slavery in the West Indies, and of sending a copy of Lord Brougham's speech on that occasion to America to be printed in *The Liberator*. Before leaving London, Garrison was present at the funeral of his fellow-emancipator Wilberforce, in Westminster Abbey.

The report of Garrison's labours in England had crossed the Atlantic before him ; and on his arrival in New York, he found placards posted throughout the city, inciting the people to attack him on his arrival. He escaped, however, at this time uninjured. But a better occasion for the display of the popular hatred shortly occurred, when a mob of many thousands presented themselves at a meeting held by him and George Thompson, who had arrived from London, and seizing Garrison, dragged him violently through the streets, under threats of immediate vengeance. It was only by the interposition of some persons of influence that he was saved from a horribly violent death. At last he was conveyed to the Mayor's house, and thence for safety to the prison. The next day, after an examination for form's sake, he was released from prison ; but, at the earnest entreaties of the city authorities, quitted Boston for a time.

In 1840 and 1846, Garrison again visited England in connection with the anti-slavery agitation ; nor did he abate for one hour in his zeal till the beginning of 1865, when Congress passed the constitutional Amendment abolishing slavery in the United States of America. In an immense hall, crowded with coloured people, Mr Garrison was presented, amid acclamations, by one of their number with a wreath of flowers, in token of the love which they bore him as the champion of their rights. The warfare being thus ended and the victory won, Garrison in 1867, and again in 1877, visited England. On the former occasion, a public breakfast was given to him in London, and many speeches made in his honour. The Duke of Argyll aptly said 'that Garrison had been sailing in a stormy sea in a one-oared boat.' John Stuart Mill, in holding up Garrison's career to others, said : 'Aim at something great ; aim at the things which are difficult ; for if you aim at something noble, and succeed, you will generally find that you have not succeeded in it alone.' Professor Goldwin Smith presented him an address numerously signed, acknowledging the great work he had achieved ; and at Edinburgh, the freedom of the city was conferred upon him at an enthusiastic meeting when William Chambers, Lord Provost, was in the chair. In 1868, the sum of thirty thousand dollars was presented to him by the united contributions of friends in America and England ; and the last fourteen years of his life were spent in such philanthropic labours as his impaired health allowed him to perform. He

died in May 1879, having lived to see the full and honourable accomplishment of his work, and to leave behind him tens of thousands of his fellows who had been benefited by his labours.

### THE AMERICAN PORK MARKET.

THICK-SKINNED animals of the hog tribe thrive well in the United States. The number now living, waiting to be killed in due time, is estimated at thirty-five millions. Maize or Indian corn is the food with which they are mostly supplied ; and the crops of this grain have been lately so abundant that swine-rearing is increasing in extent every year. The animals convert the corn, as well as oats obtainable at a shilling a bushel, and cheap bulky crops of grass and clover, into meat, which piggy himself carries to market in his own person. Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Indiana, and Kentucky are the chief states, all far inland beyond the Atlantic seaboard. The breeds mostly reared are the Berkshire hog, the Essex Fisher Hobbs, and a Chinese hog—possibly of the kind immortalised in Charles Lamb's *Essay on Roast Pig*. Abundance of room and exercise, with varied food while growing, develop size, and meat more lean than we are accustomed to in England. The price at market varies extremely in the different states, but the average is said to be barely sixteen shillings each. The ages at the time of sale vary from six to eighteen months, and the weights from one hundred to three hundred pounds.

It is in the slaughtering and curing, or what the Americans call 'packing,' that the gigantic nature of the trade shows itself. A few of the hogs are killed and salted by the farmers who rear them ; but nearly all are sold to the packers or curers. Formerly these enterprising firms slaughtered only during the winter ; but now, by abundant supplies of Wenham and other ice, nearly half the packing is begun and completed during the summer months, when vegetable food is cheap and abundant, and the fattening can go on rapidly. The lower the price at which the packers can purchase the live-stock, the more rapidly does the trade of packing increase, and the larger the size of the individual establishments. Three-fourths of this immense and peculiar branch of business is carried on in the six cities of Chicago, Cincinnati, St Louis, Milwaukee, Louisville, and Indianapolis. Chicago, so astonishingly great in many things, is assuredly great in this, for in 1879 there were seven million hogs assembled within its limits, of which five millions were slaughtered within the year. Messrs Armour & Co. are credited with being at the head of the trade ; two other great concerns being the Chicago Packing and Provision Company, and Messrs Fowler Brothers.

A well-informed correspondent of the *Times* wrote a capital account of the operations at Messrs Armour's, the result of personal observation. At their Chicago works ten thousand

gruntern are slaughtered daily during the summer, the winter number often rising to twenty thousand per day. The works cover fourteen acres; the buildings generally being four stories high. Lifts and hydrants are supplied in great abundance; and a trained fire-brigade is maintained among the workmen, whose number is upwards of two thousand—all paid by day-work, under an organisation that prevents any man from shirking his duty. Chicago is a famous place for great conflagrations; and we need not be surprised to learn that the premises are insured for one million dollars. The wages are liberal, ten to fifteen shillings for the slaughterers and skilled operatives, and six to eight shillings for ordinary labourers—per day of ten hours.

The animals are reared in the surrounding districts and selected for various markets and purposes; then furnished with food and water in large pens and yards, until the hour of their doom has nearly arrived. They are driven up an ascent to the third story of a building. Then, around the victim's hind-leg just above his dew-claw a piece of chain having a ring at each end is passed. From a roller overhead is lowered a chain, terminating with a hook which is dexterously passed into the ring on the leg, and the long chain steadily wound up by steam. When the pig's head is about five feet from the ground another hook, suspended from a wheel, is fixed into the ring round the limb, and he is sent down by his own gravity along a descending rail or tramway. 'The hog, astounded at being raised heels first, makes little resistance;' but his power of feeling astonishment is speedily brought to an end by the keen knife of the slaughterer.

The subsequent operations follow one another with great rapidity. Each animal, when dead, is unhooked and plunged into a vat of steam-heated water for three minutes. Then a kind of huge gridiron-rake lifts it up to a table or stand, which is carried along a railway to a very curious series of scrapers, consisting of seven revolving cylinders studded with nearly fifty blades each; and in the brief space of ten seconds piggy is scraped quite or nearly clean. After being freed from hairs and scurf by jets of water, the carcass is raised again by a hook in the nose, sent down an inclined railway, and eviscerated, each part being separated and cleansed. The lungs, heart, and liver are transferred to the sausage department; the stomach is set aside as a bag for sausage-meat; the intestines, stripped of fat and well cleansed, form the skins or cases for the sausages. Next the head is cut off; the eyes and brain are removed to the lard-tank; the tongue is set apart for potting; the dainty glutinous ears are similarly treated. And then the headless carcass passes on to the cooling-room. All these operations—catching and hooking the hog, killing, cleansing, anatomising, and conveying to the cooling-room—occupy only a quarter of an hour.

In the lofty cooling-room, kept in the autumn at a steady temperature of about forty degrees Fahrenheit by the aid of overhanging punkahs,

the victims are allowed to remain hanging five or six hours; then split down the back, and sent along a railway to the ice-chamber, a vast room four hundred feet long by two hundred in width, kept cold by a bed or stratum of ice twenty feet thick overhead. Here the hog-carcases remain thirty hours. So essential is this cooling to the success of the subsequent operations, that five thousand railway wagon-loads of ice, each containing fourteen tons, are used annually. Firm and dry, the carcass, still suspended from rails overhead, is run to another long room, and subjected to the tender mercies of cutting implements. Each half, separated from its fellow, is laid upon a stout bench; with one blow from a powerful chopper the ham is severed; the shoulder and underlying ribs are cut off; there is left a rectangular piece destined to become a side of bacon; and finally a gentler blow separates the feet. So skilful and expeditious are the men who wield these choppers, that they can earn fifteen shillings a day each, on an average of the whole year. The oblong pieces to make sides of bacon, weighing fifty or sixty pounds each, are transferred to the salting-house, where salt and a little saltpetre are well rubbed in. Then piled fifteen or twenty one on another in a dark cool room, in a week's time they are again rubbed with salt, which is allowed three to six weeks to do its wonted work, according as the bacon is intended for short or long keeping. Tested, washed, scraped, and dried, the bacon is ready for packing, which is done eight or ten sides in a box. It is astounding to hear of Messrs Armour turning out *eighty million pounds* of bacon, sides and shoulders, in a year; and that a hundred and fifty boxes are occasionally packed and sent off in an hour to the dealers, wholesale and retail, when orders are pressing! 'In Liverpool and many other United Kingdom ports large quantities of this bacon, as well as of the barrelled pork, are purchased, washed, and disposed of at a handsome profit as "Prime Wiltshire," or "First-class Yorkshire." Although most of the bacon is only salted, some is singed to imitate British home-cured, by exposing it to burning straw and shavings; whereby the meat is said to be rendered more tender.

Special interest attaches to the hams, on account of the large sale found for them in England, under many *aliases*; 'they are found in Bond Street and other West-end fashionable shops, where their Chicago origin is not conspicuously set forth.' Messrs Armour send forth five million pounds of these hams annually; those that reach London are reckoned by hundreds of thousands, and are sold wholesale at about sixpence per pound, weighing twelve or thirteen pounds each. In curing them they are steeped for sixty or seventy days in a pickle of salt, sugar, and saltpetre; turned over three or four times; hung for three days in the smoking-house, amid the vapour of maple sawdust; scraped, brushed, sewn neatly in cotton, and stamped; packed thirty or forty each in boxes; and sent off to market. In summer they are packed in crates instead of boxes. The so-called 'breakfast bacon,' made of the light bellies from younger animals, in shapely pieces of eight or ten pounds-weight, is treated much in the same manner as the hams, rolled in gray paper and sewn in calico. For the American market the breakfast bacon is brushed over with chrome yellow

and rice-flour to avert the attacks of flies; but English buyers object to this addition.

Pickled or salt pork is among the produce which Messrs Armour compel the grunTERS to yield. The belly-pieces from smaller hogs are pickled in great vats; of which forty thousand casks, containing two to three hundred pounds each, are prepared and packed in a year. The meat is sent to the lumberers, the sugar and rice plantations, and the West India Islands; and a demand for it is growing in France and Belgium. With us, at four or five pence per pound wholesale, there is now a brisk demand for the pork to boil with Ostend rabbits.

Sausages—what about them? The ingredients and making of these often-suspicious comestibles are said to be here irreproachable. Steam-driven mincers in large vats grind into pulp portions of pork, trimmings from the sides and hams, with heart, liver, &c. Twenty thousand pounds of this mixture is packed into sausage-skins every day, and sold to the Chicago butchers, hotel-keepers, and others at about twopence-halfpenny per pound—a price at which a Londoner would stare indeed. Besides the ordinary kind, sausages are made to imitate in some degree the Frankfort and Bologna varieties. Springing out of this manufacture, ingenuity has found a method of using the soft parts of pigs' heads, cleansed and minced, seasoned with salt, pepper, and spices, carefully cooked, and canned in two-pound and four-pound square tins; it will keep good for ten years, and is known as Chicago brawn.

Lard is another item in the list. Purchasing hogs above the average in condition, Messrs Armour obtain forty pounds of lard from each. Fat and other refuse, melted in large steam-heated vats and strained, yield lard of various qualities for different markets.

Nothing is wasted; piggy is made to yield useful products literally from every part. The best bristles are cleansed and set aside for the brushmaker and the cobbler; while the bulk of the hair is packed in large bales and sent principally to England, where, mixed with horse-hair, it is used for stuffing railway and other carriage cushions. The blood carefully collected during the killing is dried in revolving steam-heated cylinders, treated with a little ammonia, and sold to the manure manufacturers. The bones, after being crushed, are dried, pressed, and passed through a steam-heated cylinder, and constitute a valuable fertiliser.

A wonderful concern is this assuredly. 'Mr Armour,' we are told, 'rightly declares that he can work for a small profit. He says he has got rich by selling cheaply. He insists on ready-money transactions, and makes accordingly no bad debts. To use his own expression, his agents go with the goods in one hand and get the money in the other. England is not an uninterested party in the matter; for of all the vast production of this establishment, more than half is exported, to England more than to any other country—especially sugar-cured hams and what are termed fancy goods.

The one great danger in connection with all consumption of pork is the chance of incurring the disease called *trichinosis*. The modern knowledge of trichinosis, says a recent writer in the *Times*, and the steps by which that knowledge

has been gained, form one of the most curious chapters in the annals of science. Many years ago, Sir James Paget, then a student, observed that the muscles of a human subject which he was dissecting were thickly beset by fine particles, like grains of white sand, and he applied himself to ascertain their nature. He found that each particle was a little cell or bag, covered by a calcareous envelope, and containing a tiny worm, curled up into a spiral twist. It consequently received the name of *Trichina spiralis*, and was described as a parasite inhabiting human muscles. It was not, however, till after a series of experiments had been made, that the natural history of the parasite was learned. It was then found that when once the parasite is enveloped in its calcareous covering, it remains in that condition in the muscle, and does no further harm to the individual. But if a piece of muscle charged with these capsules be eaten by any animal, the action of the digestive fluids of the stomach dissolves them, and the contained worms are set at liberty within the alimentary canal, where they speedily deposit myriads of ova. In the course of a few days these ova are hatched, and give exit to innumerable young *trichinae*, each of which is furnished with a sharp extremity, by means of which it can perforate the soft tissues of the body. The brood thus set free, travel till they arrive at muscle, in which they become encapsuled, and remain in that condition until they happen to be swallowed again.

In the human being affected by trichinosis, strong febrile symptoms mark the first stage of the disease; but if the patient be strong enough to resist the malady till the worms enter on their encapsuled state in the muscles, he may recover, as in that condition the creatures are harmless. In France, the subject has been before the legislature, and the import of American pork has been meanwhile prohibited. The subject has also been mentioned in the English parliament, where it was stated that the government had resolved not to stop the supply from America or elsewhere. The responsible official who made this statement added that the annual importation of pork into this country exceeded nine and a half million hundredweight, or more than twenty pounds-weight per head of the entire population. The value of the meat so imported was nine and a half millions sterling. Such a considerable source of food-supply could not therefore be stopped unless for very strong and urgent reasons. He concluded by stating that a guarantee for safety from disease could be found only in the thorough cooking of the pork. And this we would also urge.

The prevalence of trichinosis in certain countries on the continent is evidently due to the practice of eating imperfectly cooked sausages, and pork that has been merely smoked. It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the heads of families that pork, of all food, should be *thoroughly cooked*, a warning which applies also to sausages. Even where pork is loaded with *trichinae*, thorough boiling or roasting effectually destroys them, and the meat may be eaten with perfect safety.

It would be a great misfortune to the poorer classes in this country were the importation of foreign meat-supplies to cease; and any chance of this as the result of alarm regarding the above disease, may be rendered nil by each cook

and housewife taking the matter into her own hands, and rendering, by a thorough preparation of the food, the existence of the disease impossible.

### RALPH THE PEACEMAKER.

#### A COUNTRY IDYLL.

THE evening meal is finished, and my husband and I sit down before the fire to spend the most enjoyable part of the day. He, after the manner of his kind, unfolds the newspaper and buries his face behind it. My fingers are soon busy with bright-coloured fancy-work. Edward affects to despise this occupation, though he never fails to remind me when a new pair of slippers are wanted. For half an hour nothing is heard but the click of the needle and rustle of the newspaper. Ralph, a venerable retriever, stretched upon the hearth-rug, becoming weary of the monotony, rises and places his large intelligent head upon my lap, looking up with kind expressive brown eyes. He has come for a little petting, and gets it to his heart's content. Good old Ralph! though your curly black coat is sprinkled with gray, you are still a prime favourite in the household, and have easy times under an indulgent mistress. Reader, you will scarcely wonder that we regard him with such affection, when you learn what a valuable service he once rendered us.

It was some years ago, in the days of my maidenhood. My father's home was a pretty sheltered villa, outside the little town of G—. From the windows, we could see across a few meadows the clear water of the river; and beyond, through the distant trees, the delicate spire of a church. It formed a beautiful rural picture, the fresh green of the foliage undimmed by the smoke of factories. At the other end of the town lived Edward Drayton—the same individual who sits there silently reading his newspaper—who worked busily from morning to night in a musty office. We seldom met during the week; but with unflinching regularity he called for me every Sunday afternoon. In summer, when the bright sunshine invited every living creature to delight in the warm rays, we would stroll arm-in-arm through the meadows and wander by the side of the river. Ralph always accompanied us.

How the hours fled past as we sat and watched the martins skimming over the surface, or read what were to us the most interesting of love-stories in one another's eyes! This courtship had lasted several months, when a foolish quarrel threatened to break our engagement off altogether. The cause was trivial in itself, and I now wonder how we can ever have let such a thing trouble us; but unfortunately lovers are much given to misunderstanding one another. Each of us had a considerable share of pride, too much at all events to make the first overtures of peace. Gloomily we nursed our resentment during the week. Twice had we met in the street, and passed without a word.

Did his heart throb like mine, I wonder, and a plea for forgiveness rise to his lips? If it did, he allowed the opportunity to pass unimproved. Sunday came round again. Only one week had elapsed since the quarrel, but oh! how the days had dragged by; what a weary, weary time it had been! The afternoon was bright and sunny. A delicious south wind tempered the summer heat. No ring at the bell announced the welcome notice, 'Mr Drayton to see you, Miss.' Lonely and sick at heart, I strolled out into the meadows. I noticed not that the ground was carpeted with buttercups, and the air full of the hum of insects; the bitter reflections within excluded all else. The stile was reached, the smooth comfortable old stile near the river, where some one had always before been so ready to assist; but he was not here to-day, and the mere thought caused the pent-up tears to burst forth. Sitting down beneath a gnarled oak hard by, I laid my face in my hands and sobbed piteously. Presently, Ralph's joyous bark aroused me from the painful reverie. Looking up, I saw bending over me the dear object of my regrets, who said, as he gave a reconciling kiss: 'Ralph has brought me to you, and taught us both a wholesome lesson.'

True enough, the sagacious dog had played the part of peacemaker. I remembered seeing him follow me from the house, but had been too absorbed to notice his disappearance. Some reflection like this must have passed through his canine imagination: 'My mistress goes out alone, sad and unhappy; formerly, she had some one with her, and the result was different; let me run and fetch the third person, and doubtless we shall all three be glad together.'

Whether such were his thoughts or not, he trotted off to the other end of the town, and called at the Draytons' house. He found Edward sitting disconsolately in the garden, pretending to read. Ralph placed his forepaws on Edward's knees and gave a short inquiring kind of bark; then started off towards the gate, returned, and almost as plainly as words could have done, requested to be followed. Nothing loath to lay aside the book, and wondering what the dog could want, Edward rose, and started along the path. Ralph's joy knew no bounds; with barks of delight, he ran ahead, turning every now and then to wait for his companion. Thus had he brought the repentant lover to the field where his mistress sat sobbing beneath the oak-tree. And there Ralph now stood, holding forth eloquently with his tail, and something almost like a quiet smile lurking about the corners of his mouth.

In honour of the occasion, a little wren hopped out of her moss-roofed cottage on the bough above, and burst forth into a flood of high-pitched music. Her throat swelled, and her tiny lungs worked bravely, as the song grew into a passion of shrill melody. That song was the precursor of a peal of bells!

As some return for the gratitude we owe to Ralph, it is our delight to treat him as a worthy aged retainer. All his wants are supplied with affectionate care, the troubles of advanced years being smoothed away as far as possible.

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